

7/17/95- 02401

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17 JUL 1995

Department of Environmental Sciences  
Virginia Institute of Marine Science  
Attn: Dr. Morris H. Roberts, Jr.  
Professor of Marine Science and Chair  
Gloucester Point, VA 23602-1346

Re: Contract N62470-89-D-4814, Contract Task Order (CTO)  
0252 Comment Responses for the Draft Summary of  
Background Constituent Concentrations and  
Characterization of the Biotic Community from the York  
River Drainage Basin, Naval Weapons Station Yorktown,  
Yorktown, Virginia

Dear Dr. Roberts:

The Navy is pleased to provide a copy of the responses to comments on the subject report for your review and comment. Because comments on the Background Report by VIMS and the regulators can be addressed by these comment responses, a Final Background Report will be submitted in lieu of a Draft Final submittal on July 24, 1995. This is required because this report is referenced in the Site 16 and SSA-16 Remedial Investigation/Baseline Risk Assessment Report (RI/BLRA).

Changes to the Site Management Plan schedule for Site 16 and SSA-16 have been made and approved by the regulators in order to expedite the Record of Decision for these sites. Thus, the Final RI/BLRA and the Final Proposed Plan for these two sites will also be received on July 24, 1995. The 45-day public comment period for the Proposed Plan will begin on July 25, 1995. It is our intention to follow the public comment period with a Final Record of Decision for these two sites no later than September 29, 1995.

If you have any questions concerning these responses to your comments on the Final Background Report, please contact Mrs. Brenda R. Norton, P.E. as soon as possible at (804) 322-4778.

Sincerely,

Nina M. Johnson, P.E.  
Head  
Installation Restoration  
Section (South)  
Environmental Programs Branch  
Environmental Quality Division  
By direction of the Commander

Enclosure

Blind copy to: (w/encl)

1822 (BRN)

1822 (GPH)

1822 (Admin Record)

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**Response to Comments Submitted by VIMS  
On the Draft Background Report  
Naval Weapons Station Yorktown  
Yorktown, Virginia  
VIMS Comment Letter dated June 7, 1995**

**General Comments**

- 1) This typographical error will be corrected.
- 2) This typographical error will be corrected.
- 3) The station ecology provided presents general observations reported from previously conducted studies at WPNSTA Yorktown. In addition, as each RI/FS site is investigated, each sampling station is further characterized including physical and habitat parameters.

The reference to the tree frog was provided by the following investigation conducted by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation - Division of Natural Heritage: A Natural Heritage Resources Inventory of the Naval Weapons Station Yorktown, Department of Navy, Yorktown, Virginia (K.A. Buhlmann and J.C. Ludwig, 1992). Along with the gray treefrog and the green treefrog; the northern cricket frog, southern toad, bullfrog, green frog, leopard frog, pickerel frog, and spadefoot toad also were observed at WPNSTA Yorktown.

The existence of coontail, mosquitofish, and other flora and fauna will be determined when the on-station ponds are evaluated in the upcoming RI/FS investigations.

- 4) The fish species referred to as "fungulus" was a typographical error. The fundulus species was identified as a juvenile mummichog and will be recorded as such in the final document.

The sea robin noted in Timberneck Creek is not expected to regularly inhabit tidal freshwater creeks. However, the sea robin was observed in this tidal creek probably due to the wide unobstructed connection between the York River and Timberneck Creek (sea robins were collected at the mouth of Timberneck Creek).

One spot species was observed in the tidal freshwater portion of Taskinas Creek. The spot was a juvenile, which can sometimes be found in tidal freshwater.

- 5 & 6) The text will be corrected to be consistent with the tables provided in Section 6. 3). The station ecology provided presents general observations

- 7) The correct units will be added to these tables.